

Session 16-02 Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on February 18, 2016 at 5:32 pm by Chair Matt Steffy at the Cowles Council Chambers City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS LOWNEY, STEFFY, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, ROEDL, ASHMUN, AND HART

STAFF: JULIE ENGBRETSSEN, DEPUTY CITY PLANNER
RENEE KRAUSE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Steffy called for a motion to approve the agenda.

LOWNEY/BRANN – MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA.

There was a brief discussion on being efficient, limiting conversations and making motions.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA

There were no comments from the audience present.

VISITORS

A. Lisa Asselin-Martin, Homer Early Childhood Coalition, Bayview Park Improvements

Ms. Asselin-Martin presented the commission a PowerPoint presentation on the improvements made to the city park by the Coalition and Best Beginnings and the needed improvements, many of which were general repair and replacement of aging structures. This is a park that is designated for smaller, younger children and is designed to host features that make it accessible for children with mobility issues. She noted that the Coalition has been working with Angie Otteson, Public Works Parks Manager and Rick Malley, ADA Specialist with the Independent Living Center. They are requesting the support of the Commission in submitting a Request for funding from Council to continue improvements to the park first priority is a new fence. They have received an estimate in excess of \$37,000 to remove the existing fence and replace with a new fence. She hoped that the Commission would support the recommendation and request to Council.

There were a few questions on providing in-kind services, use of a different fence design that would be less costly and bringing back more concrete pricing.

B. Friends of Woodard Creek, First Steps, Woodard Creek, Karen Hornaday Park

Robert Archibald, member of the group, presented a brief plan on the long proposed trail along Woodard Creek including a foot bridge over the creek at or about Danview Avenue. The Friends have funds and are proposing to hire a surveyor and obtain a survey along the eastern boundary of the park which the creek runs along. There are several private property owners and the group doesn't want to encroach on private property. This plan has been given support and approval by previous commission's

and Council's and they want to start on the project. They are seeking the support and recommendation to the City Manager to get the survey. At this time no city funds will be needed for the completion of a survey.

There were a few questions and comments from the commissioners regarding the project concerning the placement of trail.

Commissioner Archibald returned to his seat on the dais.

RECONSIDERATION

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes for the regular meeting of January 21, 2016

Chair Steffy called for a motion to adopt the consent agenda.

LOWNEY/BRANN - MOVED TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: NON OBJECTION: UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Motion carried.

STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS

A. Staff Report – Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner

Ms. Engebretsen reviewed her report briefly and inquired if there were any questions. She advised the Commission regarding the reconsideration on Ordinance 16-05 which covered the driving on beaches issues. She noted that if reconsidered Councilmember Lewis was presenting a substitute ordinance for consideration. She was not aware of the details at this time and recommended Commissioners go to the city website.

Commissioner Archibald offered that Council member Lewis was presenting an amendment to allow vehicles in a limited area at Mariner Park.

Commissioner Lowney inquired about the steel caps at the park and she invited the commissioners to approach Public Works. She has advised the City Manager on their request.

C. Community Recreation Report – Mike Illg

Recreation Specialist Illg was not present and did not provide a written report for the meeting.

D. Parks Report – Angie Otteson

Ms. Otteson was not in attendance and did not provide a written report.

PUBLIC HEARING

PENDING BUSINESS

A. Additional Trash Cans on the Spit Trail

Chair Steffy requested a motion to discuss.

Ms. Engebretsen provided a laydown of the recommendations submitted by the commissioners that included the following:

- 2196 Homer Spit Rd Honey's Place B & B
- Top of Crittenden Trail to the beach
- Bottom of Crittenden Trail – on the beach – removed from list
- Mud Bay Parking Lot – bottom of Airport Beach Access Road
- base of Spit Parking Lot – Homer Spit Trailhead
- top of Main Street beach Access
- bottom of Main Street on the beach – removed from list

Discussion ensued on recommendations for more trash receptacles are needed in the winter time as well as summer particularly along the Spit Trail at minimum adding three additional cans. Further spots that were recommended was at the head of Reber Trail, it is a matter of location with regards to staff time and accessibility such as Reber Trail and on the beach. Further discussion was the problems with the public using private or city dumpsters to get rid of household trash. Commissioner Lowney expressed concern regarding educating the public more.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD – MOVED TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL TRASH CANS PLACED AROUND TOWN.

Commissioner Lowney requested additional trash cans along the spit trail in the middle of the spit. Further discussion on the collection of trash and addressing the frequency of placement in coordination with the ones already in place and that they should be covered ensued. One more additional spot in winter that would be good is the RV Dump Station and in one of the pocket parks along Spruceview due to all the foot traffic. The commissioner removed the beach locations.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Lowney advised the commission that HOWL will not be cleaning up trash this year and the Chamber is very interested in doing something with the trash cans and she will advise the commission on her progress. She stated that if businesses buy in on the program then they would be responsible for maintenance, etc. This is a separate issue and all ideas should be sent to her.

B. HERC

Chair Steffy requested a motion to discuss.

BRANN/ROEDL – MOVED TO DISCUSS THE HERC BUILDING.

There was no objection.

Commissioner Lowney brought this issue up again since it keeps coming up in other discussions. She noted that she attended the Lunch with Council at the Library and the issue came up then as well. However she felt that they should table any further discussion until Council makes a decision on the Public Safety Building. Commissioner Lowney did state that if a group of citizens wanted to save the HERC they could start an initiative to get the issue on the ballot.

Staff cautioned the commission on the involvement in the initiative in the capacity as a Commissioner but could contact the Clerk's Office to get the information and details as a private citizen. Deputy City Planner Engebretsen further stated that they should be aware of measures that there is enough information that the public can vote and make an informed decision. The topic will be tabled until someone brings back a specific action for the Commission to address on the HERC.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Request for Recommendation of Support to Determine the East Boundary of Karen Hornaday Park

BRANN/LOWNEY - MOVED TO APPROVE THE REQUEST TO SURVEY THE EAST BOUNDARY OF KAREN HORNADAY PARK AND SUBMIT RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY MANAGER.

There was a brief discussion regarding the approval is for completion of a survey only to be funded by Friends of Woodard Creek and Karen Hornaday Park and report back to the commission.

VOTE. YES. ASHMUN, ROEDL, BRANN, STEFFY, HART AND LOWNEY

Motion carried.

Commissioner Archibald abstained due to his involvement in the project and group.

B. Funding Request for Bayview Park Improvements

Chair Steffy read the title into the record and requested a motion.

LOWNEY/ROEDL - MOVED TO SUBMIT A REQUEST TO CITY COUNCIL TO PROVIDE \$35,000 FOR BAYVIEW PARK IMPROVEMENTS.

The commission discussed the funding when the group brings back a more concrete estimate of costs, and questioned the amount remaining in park reserves. Staff provided the information that the reserves were used for the cemetery design and recommended that the commission make a motion and submit it to Council; it will be up to the Council to find the funding sources or they may even fund them a set amount and the group will have to cost share the remaining funds needed to complete the

improvements.

VOTE. YES. LOWNEY, HART, STEFFY, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, ROEDL

Motion carried.

C. Protecting Our Parks and Green Spaces

Chair Steffy read the title into the record and asked if Commissioner Lowney had any additional information to add.

Commissioner Lowney noted that the photos did not make it into the packet showing the damage to Karen Hornaday Park. She expressed her concerns with vandalism and asked how they could effectively deal with this and save money by not having to re-do work, also taking care of deferred maintenance. The vandalism up at Karen Hornaday Park in the field next to the new pavilion, the damage is not severe, but how to they stop that. There are numerous things such as the picnic tables near the dugout need replacement, protecting the areas of beaches. Taking care of things such as a board falling off and laying on the ground with nails up presenting a danger, removing new fencing that was supposed to come down is still standing; who manages this and sees that agreements are made and upheld.

Commissioner Lowney did not appreciate that the lack of repairs and the vandalism provides the wrong message to the community. She was not sure what the commission could do about these issues.

BRANN/ROEDL – MOVED TO CONTINUE DISCUSSION ON PROTECTING OUR GREEN SPACES.

The commission discussed the lack of deferred maintenance, and possible placement of barriers to dissuade vehicles. That taking care of the community's green spaces will show that we care, not offering a spot where people can hide out of sight; requesting cooperation from the users of the parks and facilities; there is no money and most residents are not aware of the problems how do they provide awareness. Further discussion covered the remedies to block any future vehicular access to the fields up at Karen Hornaday Park and use of agreements and making sure the organizations will take care of the equipment they have, contacting Angie to speak with those organizations.

Commissioner Lowney only visited those areas and parks in town. Karen Hornaday Park seems to be the only issue at this time.

ARCHIBALD/ MOVED TO REQUEST PUBLIC WORKS PERSONNEL PLACE LARGE BOULDERS OR SIMILAR VEHICULAR BARRIERS TO PROTECT SENSITIVE GREEN SPACES, PARK FACILITIES AND KEEP THE PUBLIC FROM SPECIFIC AREAS OF KAREN HORNADAY PARK.

Further discussion on using alternative materials or barriers to keep vehicles in the past did not work and were not aesthetically pleasing.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

LOWNEY/ROEDL - MOVED TO RECOMMEND THAT A POLICY REGARDING MAINTENANCE FOR PARK FACILITIES BE CREATED.

A brief discussion ensued on the possibility of an existing policy, what was done currently to deal with issues at the city parks.

LOWNEY/STEFFY – MOVED TO POSTPONE DISCUSSION ON THIS MOTION TO THE NEXT MEETING.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

D. Amending the Commission Bylaws Regarding Adding Items to the Agenda

Chair Steffy read the title into the record and requested a motion.

ASHMUN/LOWNEY – MOVED TO DISCUSS AMENDING THE BYLAWS.

Discussion on the proposed amendment was met favorably by a majority of the commission.

LOWNEY/ARCHIBALD – MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS TO HAVE AGENDA PROCESS VETTED BY THE CHAIR OR VICE CHAIR AND ADD IT TO THE MARCH MEETING AGENDA FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING.

There was additional brief discussion on the benefits of making this change. If the Chair is not available the Vice Chair will be delegated the task or if he/she is not available then the Chair will appoint a commissioner to fill the role of acting chair. Staff explained that previously the Chair determined the agenda. A draft agenda containing items that were carried over, on the annual calendar or submitted by the Clerk, such as the regular meeting schedule would be forwarded to the Chair then they would add the additional items that were submitted to him from commissioners. This process was changed to staff and the Clerk preparing the agenda and the commissioners requesting items to be added because the Chair was not being responsive in a timely manner in completing the agenda. Staff would like to have it changed back to the way it was done.

VOTE. YES. ASHMUN, ROEDL, BRANN, ARCHIBALD, STEFFY, HART, LOWNEY

Motion carried.

E. Land Allocation Plan 2016 Recommendation

Chair Steffy read the item into the record. He requested a motion to approve Staff recommendations.

LOWNEY/ASHMUN - MOVED TO INCLUDE THE OLD HARBORMASTER OFFICE PROPERTY ON PAGE D20 AND IS DESIGNATED FOR PARKING AND RESTROOMS BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THE BOAT HOUSE PROJECT IN THE DESIGNATION.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

LOWNEY/BRANN - MOVED TO DESIGNATE THE 40 ACRES ON PAGE F7, ACQUIRED THROUGH TAX FORECLOSURE, FOR WATERSHED PROTECTION PURPOSES.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

Chair Steffy inquired if the commission had any further recommendations on land for lease.

BRANN/LOWNEY - MOVED TO RECOMMEND LOTS 9A AND 10A NOT BE LEASED BUT USED FOR SHORT TERM, FEE PARKING, TO INCLUDE RV PARKING.

Discussion centered on the high need for parking in that area and especially for RV parking. This was opined that it would be the best highest use. The Commission acknowledged that the area has been used for storage for equipment in the past.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

There were no further recommendations for leased land.

Chair Steffy inquired about previous recommendations on the Land Allocation Plan and if they had to reiterate those recommendations. Staff responded that it was not necessary. Commissioner Brann requested a clarification on what options entailed with regard to leases.

The commissioners commented on the following:

- Page D-2 Old Middle School and High School Property
Noting the basketball courts on the property since the Skateboard Park is mentioned. It was opined that they offered a value to the community.
- Page C-3 Mariner Park and Mud Bay are included in the Whisern and Council should be aware of that importance with regard to the Ordinance before them currently.
- Page D-8 Recommend a trail project be flushed out from East Hill to the High School
- Page E-6 Previously Recommended Council designate a lot for a park. Council has designated these

lots for sale and though none have received an offer. No lot lines have changed. Reserve for further discussion at a later meeting.

- Page E-11 Recommendation to clear it out and install bench with garbage can to designate this as a pocket park
- Page E-12 Recommend same treatment as page E-11

Staff is happy to answer any questions but if they want Council to address something that they need to make a motion.

Page G-4 Staff noted that Council will not deal with this when addressing land to be leased. This has already been designated as conservation.

Page E-25 Staff noted that this is actually water and noted where the park was and was one of those things and is more informational in case someone wanted to build a duck pond.

Page D-18 Recommended use for the dredge spoils. Staff noted that this may be the area recently designated for Deep Water Dock Uplands Improvements. Ms. Engebretsen will double check that information.

Page D-20 Questioned why the land “may” be required to remain parkland in perpetuity. Staff responded that there are questions and clarification could not be determined so using the word “may” alludes to the possibility of issues with the land.

Commissioner Brann inquired about the Hickerson Cemetery expansion. Chair Steffy commented on the receipt of many phone calls regarding the cemetery. Deputy City Clerk Krause updated the contact information for the chair on the city website.

F. Strategic Plan

Chair Steffy introduced the item and commented on using the Needs Assessment to revise the existing Strategic Plan. He invited Deputy City Planner Engebretsen to provide instruction to the commission.

Deputy City Planner acknowledged that this is a big task for one meeting, she would like to review the existing document and remove or update items under each section. Then offer new ideas, she has offered comments in bold before adding new items.

General Goals of the Commission

- Add quarterly Parks & Recreation Comments, Opinions and Reviews for the local paper/website
- This can be snippets of information that the organization is doing through staff reports, reports to Council and discussions such as vandalism issues.

Commissioner Lowney left the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Staff Additions: There were no cuts this year. Staff will quantify the FTE so this can be tracked.

Under 1-2 Year Projects

Remove Kayak Launch for Water Trail. Change to Picnic Pavilion

Commissioner Brann updated the commission on the status of funding for the pavilion.

Dog Park – Not in any Strategic Plan or Needs Assessment. There was consensus to remove.

Diamond Creek Recreational Improvement Plan – it is complete to be removed.

- Rogers Loop Land Acquisition – Make calls to City Manager, funds have been allocated and will stay allocated for 3 years then return to the Fund. It will have to be reallocated if not used within the time period.

- Additional Funds can be allocated from HART Fund if required to complete transaction

- Funds can be expended on city property outside city limits

- Woodard Creek Trail This can be removed allowing those commissioners involved in projects outside the commission can provide updates to the commission as the need arises.

- Karen Hornaday Park – Identify small projects that are in concert with the Master Plan

 - Research available LCWF grants that may be able to be used for any of the small projects

 - Staff will address the possible grants available

 - Drainage issue is still a problem

- Increase city budget for parks and recreation

 - Advocate for increase in staffing – .50 FTE time maintenance and .25 FTE community recreation

In review of the budget situation advocating for additional employees when we were looking at a big possibility of reducing personnel is to much and Council would be more receptive to putting money in the reserve account.

 - Increase the reserve so that funding is available as needed for general maintenance and repair

- Uniform Sign Design – Completed and approved by Council

- Bike Path on Ocean Drive around corner of Spit - repaving offers a wider shoulder but not legal width to be an actual bike path

- Review Town Center Plan – remove not timely in the scheme of things

- HERC building – remove from list to be kept within the radar of commission business, possible ballot measure for bonding Public Safety Building project.

 - Recommendation was sent to Council, continuing to bring this to Council's attention will only bring distain from the body. Staff will bring information to the next meeting within staff report regarding ballot measure.

3+ Year Projects

- Advocating for a Parks and Recreation Department

 - Focus on Department only – Staff will discuss with Administration

- Talking Points

 - Doing great remove from list

- Plan and Develop Footpaths in Town Center Area

 - Remove from list this is still in the Comp Plan but there is no interest from property owners not funding to accomplish

- Construct Bike Path along Kachemak Drive

 - Remove from the list. There are issues surrounding land ownership, right of ways, private property owner concerns and disapproval; and Homeland Security issues with the airport property.

 - Still in Comp Plan and on the CIP; city council is not willing to expend funds on this project

- Community Recreation Center

 - Staff recommendation to remove from Commission list bigger project than the commission can field, requires significant support from Council.

 - Council has approved resolution to designate Town Center parcel for community recreation center.

 - Staff noted that Mayor Wythe has stated publicly that she will support the funding for a facility

that includes a gym and office/work space for city maintenance personnel that is currently housed in the smaller building on the HERC property.

- Recommend new commissioners to travel to Sterling to view the Recreation center in Sterling
- Leave on the list for the time being

Explore the idea of a Service Area

- The tax base is not there
- remove from the commission's strategic plan as this is more of a community plan

Mariner Park Site Improvements

- Revisit this item Memorial Weekend and then make specific recommendation
- Improvements needed to the individual sites – to increase availability and parking
- Consult with Angie Otteson on design and budget issues

Chair Steffy inquired if the commission wished to extend the meeting time or postpone to the next meeting the remaining topics.

The commission agreed by consensus to postpone until the March meeting.

There was a brief discussion on creating a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

- A. Commission Annual Calendar 2016
- B. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings 2016

There was a brief discussion on Commission presence at the upcoming meeting. Staff recommended that unless the commission felt it prudent to attend they advised skipping this meeting since it is projected to be a very long meeting and a lot of controversy.

Commissioner Archibald stated he will be in attendance at that meeting and would mind offering the Council a respite from the more volatile issues. He will update the Council on the commission starting the process of melding the results of the Needs Assessment into the Commission Strategic Plan update.

COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE

Barb Brodowski, resident, commented that she has spent the last two years picking up trash along the perimeter of the harbor and in the parking lots; she has picked up about 1000 pounds of trash each year and approximately 15,000 cigarette butts. She has spent 135 days which comes to approximately 300 hours in 2015 picking up trash. She stated that she can work with the commission on the best places to place more cans, especially where the stores are on the boardwalk. Ms. Brodowski commented on advising the best position for the dumpsters too.

Ms. Engebretsen requested Ms. Brodowski contact information to pass on to the Harbormaster and Parks Maintenance personnel. Ms. Brodowski stated that email will be better,

Ms. Brodowski also commented on who is dumping garbage, wind and birds and the negative impact that lids actually have for the general public. She stated that she cannot fix the problem and the other problem is that it is needed year round, not just once or twice a year.

Chair Steffy thanked her for doing what she does. It was greatly appreciated.

Ms. Brodowski wanted to present a good image to the visitors and cruise ship visitors.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen commented that Council will be talking about adding revenue to the city so that any idea that they may have please forward them to Council or the City Manager please do. We have a stop-gap right now but the conversation is not over yet.

Deputy City Clerk Krause applauded the efforts of the commission towards efficiency and provided information from the City Manager's report on the outcome of the Hickerson Cemetery Neighborhood meeting in response to questions asked earlier.

COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER *(If one is present)*

COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Hart commented on having Main Street on the agenda for the March meeting regarding accessibility and sidewalks. She mentioned issues regarding ADA compliance with all the city parks.

Commissioner Archibald good meeting, regarding the cemetery and the subject of decaying bodies and that the state does not require vaults, he mentioned the get together at the Pratt

Commissioner Brann good meeting, thanks to staff as usual and the audience for sticking to the end, and he commented on doing parks and rec work in Kauai and he noticed that there they do park clean-up every Saturday morning and local vendors provide coffee and he thought they might be able to do a similar program here, but not every Saturday. He also mentioned the Friday Night Lights ski coming up this weekend and next, he said there is fun stuff on Saturday morning at 11 am with a the water trail and lots of stuff happening with State parks. Homer is a great place to live with lots happening.

Commissioner Roedl asked if Main Street was going to be on the March agenda, Chair Steffy confirmed that he would make it so and commented it was a good meeting.

Commissioner Ashmun commented that she Deb Lowney, Adele Person, Dave Lewis have come together as an Ad-Hoc Trails Committee that has met to take on where the Trails Symposium left off. They are looking at the areas and issues in questions so, it was a good meeting.

COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR

Commissioner Steffy commented on the efforts of staff and that he really appreciated the Chair's Agenda provided by Ms. Krause. This really helped him tonight. He mentioned the Alaska Trails is conducting some training in Anchorage, he has met and working as a rep for ARPA they have hammered out a reciprocal agreement between ARPA and AK Trails and as a benefit the commissioners will all become members with AK Trials. He appreciated everyone's efforts and it was a great meeting it was like coming back from vacation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Acting Chair Lowney adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m. The next **REGULAR MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2016** at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall Cowles Council Chambers 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

Renee Krause, CMC, Deputy City Clerk

Approved:_____